

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJECT: ARMENIAN FIRST SECRETARY SACKED

1. PRAVDA NOV 28 CARRIED BRIEF ITEM ANNOUNCING THAT PLENUM OF ARMENIAN CP CENTRAL COMMITTEE HAD MET ON NOV 27 AND RELEASED ANTON Y. KOCHINYAN FROM HIS DUTIES AS FIRST SECRETARY AND MEMBER OF ARMENIAN POLITBURO. PLENUM ALSO GRANTED HIS REQUEST TO GO INTO RETIREMENT. SELECTED AS ARMENIAN FIRST SECRETARY IS KAREN SEROPOVICH DEMIRCHYAN (A MALE), FORMERLY A SECRETARY OF THE ARMENIAN CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

2. ARMENIAN PARTY AND GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER, "KOMMUNIST," (JUST ARRIVE IN MOSCOW) ALSO CARRIED ANNOUNCEMENT NOV 28, NOTING THAT PLENUM WAS DEVOTED TO "ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS" AND THAT DEPUTY CHIEF OF CP CENTRAL COMMITTEE SECTION ON ORGANIZATONAL-PARTY WORK, N.A. PETROVICHEV, WAS PRESENT. PAPER ALSO PUBLISHED FOLLOWING BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON DEMIRCHYAN: BORN 1932 IN YEREVAN. GRADUATE OF YEREVAN POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND HIGHER PARTY SCHOOL. FROM 1954-1958 WORKED AS SENIOR CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER AND GROUP LEADER IN

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SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN LENINGRAD, LATER AS

SHOP SUPERINTENDENT IN YEREVAN ELECTRO-TECHNICAL PLANT, SERVING AS SECRETARY OF PLANT'S PARTY COMMITTEE. IN 1961, AFTER GRADUATING FROM HIGHER PARTY SCHOOL, WORKED AS CHIEF ENGINEER AND DIRECTOR OF SAME PLANT. FROM 1966-1972 SERVED AS SECOND SECRETARY OF YEREVAN CITY PARTY COMMITTEE. IN NOV 1972 ELECTED A SECRETARY OF ARMENIAN CP CENTRAL COMMITTEE. DEMIRCHYAN IS ALSO A DEPUTY OF ARMENIAN SUPREME SOVIET.

3. COMMENT: WHILE, AS USUAL, NO REASON WAS GIVEN FOR KOCHINYAN'S DISMISSAL, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT IT WAS NOT DUE TO OLD AGE. (HE IS 61.) ARMENIA, LIKE OTHER CAUCASUS REPUBLICS HAS BEEN OBJECT OF MUCH CRITICISM BY CENTRAL PARTY AUTHORITIES FOR VARIETY OF DEFICIENCIES, E.G. LACK OF LABOR DISCIPLINE, GRAFT AND CORRUPTION, AND GENERAL IDEOLOGICAL LAXITY, WITH IMPLICATION THAT VESTIGES OF ARMENIAN NATIONALISM CONTINUE TO EXIST. DISSIDENT ACADEMICIAN SAKHAROV RECENTLY RELEASED STATEMENT ABOUT JAILING OF NUMBER OF ARMENIANS FOR ALLEGEDLY TRYING TO FORM OPPOSITION MOVEMENT AND THIS CASE MAY HAVE HAD PLAYED ROLE IN KOCHINYAN'S FALL. WE HAVE HEARD THAT KOCHINYAN WAS WALKING A TIGHTROPE AND MAY HAVE HAD LIMITED TIME TO PUT ARMENIAN HOUSE IN ORDER. CASE OF ARMENIAN NATIONALISTS MAY HAVE GIVEN HIM FINAL SHOVE OVER THE WIRE.

4. DEMIRCHYAN'S APPOINTMENT IS SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL BECAUSE OF HIS RELATIVE YOUTH AND HIS JUMPING OVER PRESENT SECOND SECRETARY P.P. ANISIMOV (WHO IS, HOWEVER, PRESUMABLY A RUSSIAN AND WOULD THEREFORE BE UNLIKELY CANDIDATE FOR ARMENIAN FIRST SECRETARYSHIP). IT WOULD SEEM THAT CP LEADERSHIP IS DISSATISFIED WITH GENERAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION IN ARMENIA AND WANTS TO PUMP SOME NEW BLOOD IN BEFORE CONDITION GETS OUT OF HAND.

5. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ANY BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE ON DEMIRCHYAN.
STOESSEL

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